

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 PM-05 H-01
SSM-03 PA-01 PRS-01 SIG-01 SSO-00 /058 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:MKBERRY:DP
APPROVED BY NEA/P:GFSHERMAN
S/PRS - MR. CARTER (INFO)
H - MR. FLATEN (INFO)
SSM - MR. MC ANDREW
NEA - MR. COLLUMS
NEA/ARN - MR. REUTHER
NEA/IAI - MR. SMITH
NEA/EGY - MR. NEWBERRY

-----121146 192330Z /63

O 192229Z JUL 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION SINAI
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
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USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USCINCEUR

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CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - JULY 19

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE, FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING FOR JULY 19,
1977:

Q. WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT GOVERNOR SCRANTON'S MEETING
WITH THE PLO?

A. WE ARE AWARE THAT GOVERNOR SCRANTON MET RECENTLY WITH
A PLO REPRESENTATIVE AT THE LATTER'S INITIATIVE WHILE THE
GOVERNOR WAS OVERSEAS FOR OTHER PURPOSES. THE GOVERNOR
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WAS TRAVELING AS A PRIVATE PERSON, WAS NOT CARRYING ANY
MESSAGES FROM THE ADMINISTRATION OR ACTING ON BEHALF OF THE
ADMINISTRATION. BUT I THINK ON ANY SPECIFICS YOU
SHOULD ASK HIM BEYOND WHAT I'M TELLING YOU NOW.

Q. WAS THE ADMINISTRATION AWARE THAT THE MEETING TOOK
PLACE?

A. AS A COURTESY, GOVERNOR SCRANTON DID TELL US
ABOUT IT BEFOREHAND.

Q. WAS THERE CONSULTATION WITH THE SECRETARY?

A. I DON'T BELIEVE THERE WAS CONSULTATION WITH THE
SECRETARY.

Q. WAS THERE A MEETING BEFORE GOVERNOR SCRANTON HAD HIS
MEETING?

A. NO; I DON'T THINK THERE WAS A MEETING.

Q. WAS THERE A TELEPHONE CALL?

A. ON BACKGROUND, LET ME SAY THAT I BELIEVE THERE WAS A TELEPHONE CALL TO ROY ATHERTON BY THE GOVERNOR BUT, I REPEAT, AS A COURTESY TO LET US KNOW THAT HE WAS GOING TO DO THIS. END BACKGROUND.

THAT WAS, I BELIEVE, BEFORE HE LEFT THE COUNTRY.

LET ME REPEAT: HE WAS NOT CARRYING ANY MESSAGES FOR OR ACTING ON BEHALF OF THE ADMINISTRATION.

Q. DID HE BRING ANY MESSAGES BACK FROM THE PLO MEETING?

A. WELL, HE DID NOT BRING ANY MESSAGES, BUT HE DID TALK LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WITH US AFTER THE MEETING.

Q. AND WHERE IS HE NOW?

A. I THINK HE'S IN MAINE, AS A MATTER OF FACT.

Q. WHO WAS THE PLO REPRESENTATIVE?

A. THE PLO REPRESENTATIVE IS A MAN NAMED BASIL AKIL, AND THERE ARE VARIOUS SPELLINGS OF THAT: A-K-I-L, A-Q-I-L, A-C-Q-I-L.

Q. CAN YOU SAY ANYTHING OR CONFIRM IN ANY WAY THE OTHER PART OF THE STORY WHICH SAID THAT CROWN PRINCE FAHD WAS CARRYING A MESSAGE FROM THE PLO, SPECIFICALLY FROM ARAFAT, WHEN HE MET WITH CARTER HERE?

A. NO, WE DON'T GET INTO DISCUSSIONS THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS WITH FOREIGN LEADERS.

Q. AND WHAT CONCLUSIONS OR WHAT IMPRESSIONS DID YOU HAVE AFTER GOVERNOR SCRANTON REPORTED TO WHOMEVER HE REPORTED TO HERE?

A. I'M JUST NOT GOING TO GO INTO IT. I PERSONALLY DON'T HAVE ANYTHING, NOT BEING PRIVY TO WHAT HE REPORTED, BUT I'M JUST NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO GO INTO IT AT ANY POINT.

Q. CAN YOU CHARACTERIZE IT?

A. I'M NOT GOING TO CHARACTERIZE IT IN ANY WAY BEYOND WHAT I'VE SAID.

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Q. AS A MATTER OF POLICY, DOES THE DEPARTMENT TRY TO DISCOURAGE PEOPLE LIKE GOVERNOR SCRANTON OR CONGRESSMAN HAMILTON MEETING WITH THE PLO?

A. THOSE INDIVIDUALS, AS FAR AS THE DEPARTMENT ARE CONCERNED, ARE TOTALLY UNCONNECTED WITH US, FREE TO DO WHAT THEY WANT.

Q. HAVE THERE BEEN ANY OFFICIAL CONTACT WITH THE PLO SINCE THE CONTACTS THAT WE HAVE TALKED ABOUT IN THIS ROOM WHICH RELATED TO SECURITY IN BEIRUT.

A. I AM NOT AWARE THAT THERE HAS BEEN ANY SUCH CONTACT SINCE THE TIME YOU MENTIONED.

Q. WAS THERE ANY CONSIDERATION OF THE MEETING EITHER BETWEEN SECRETARY VANCE OR ANY OTHER MEMBERS OF HIS PARTY DURING HIS PROJECTED VISIT TO THE MIDDLE EAST WITH THE PLO?

A. NOT THAT I'M AWARE OF.

Q. IS THERE ANY CONSIDERATION BEING GIVEN TO THAT?

A. I'M NOT AWARE OF ANY SUCH; NO.

Q. AS FAR AS SCRANTON IS CONCERNED, HE CARRIED NOTHING BACK EXCEPT A VERBAL SOMETHING, HEH?

A. HE WAS NOT CARRYING ANYTHING -- ANY PAPER OR ANY OTHER MESSAGE PROVIDED HIM BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT OR ACTING IN ANY WAY ON BEHALF OF THE ADMINISTRATION. HE DID NOT CARRY ANYTHING BACK EXCEPT HIS OWN IMPRESSION.

Q. WHO IN THE DEPARTMENT TALKED TO CONGRESSMEN HAMILTON AND OBEY?

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A. I THINK BOTH OF THEM ARE MEETING WITH THE SECRETARY ON THURSDAY, AND I BELIEVE AT THAT TIME WILL DISCUSS ALL OF THEIR IMPRESSIONS FROM ALL OF THEIR TRAVELS IN THE MIDDLE EAST -- PRESUMABLY INCLUDING THE MEETING THAT WAS REPORTED BETWEEN THEM AND ARAFAT.

Q. AS FAR AS YOU KNOW, DOES THE SECRETARY STILL INTEND TO VISIT THE MIDDLE EAST THE FIRST PART OF AUGUST?

A. I KNOW OF NO CHANGE IN PLAN TO VISIT THE MIDDLE EAST. WE HAVE NOT ANNOUNCED, AS YOU KNOW, A DATE.

Q. WHAT IS AKIL IN THE PLO?

A. I DON'T KNOW WHAT HIS EXACT POSITION IS, I THINK HE'S A PLO OFFICIAL. I DON'T KNOW MORE THAN THAT, REALLY.

Q. IS GOVERNOR SCRANTON A MEMBER OF THE PRESIDENT'S INTELLIGENCE ADVISORY BOARD?

A. I DON'T KNOW.

Q. HE HAS THEN NO STANDING IN THE GOVERNMENT OF ANY KIND, AS FAR AS YOU KNOW?

A. NOT THAT I KNOW OF; NO.

Q. HE'S A MEMBER, ISN'T HE, OF THAT ASKEW COMMISSION THAT SCREENS AMBASSADORIAL APPOINTMENTS?

A. WELL, IF HE IS, THAT'S THE ONLY ONE I KNOW OF, YES, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IF IT'S TRUE. I SEEM TO REMEMBER THAT HE IS.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING ON REPORTS ABOUT PENDING SALES OF AIRCRAFT AND MISSILES TO ISRAEL, EGYPT AND JORDAN AND SAUDI ARABIA -- INCLUDING F 15'S TO SAUDI ARABIA?

A. THE SAUDI ARABIAN INTEREST IN AIRCRAFT, AS YOU MAY KNOW, TO REPLACE THE BRITISH LIGHTENING IN THE EARLY 1980S, IS A LONGSTANDING INTEREST -- AND SO IS OUR COMMITMENT TO HELP SAUDI ARABIA IN ITS LEGITIMATE DEFENSE NEEDS.

WE WILL BE CONSULTING WITH CONGRESS AT THE APPROPRIATE TIME ABOUT THE SAUDI REQUEST FOR SUCH AIRCRAFT.

NO DECISION HAS BEEN MADE ABOUT WHEN A PROPOSAL MIGHT BE SUBMITTED TO THE HILL.

Q. HOW MANY ARE THEY ASKING FOR?

A. I DON'T HAVE THAT HERE. I DON'T KNOW.

Q. WHEN DO THEY WANT THEM? EARLY '80S?

A. THEY WILL REPLACE THEIR CURRENT SITUATION IN THE
EARLY 1980S, YES.

Q. AND SO THEY WANT THEM BEFORE THEN?

A. WELL BY THEN.

Q. LATE '70S.

1980S.

Q. DO YOU KNOW IF THIS SALE HAS BEEN REVIEWED TO SEE
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WHETHER IT MEETS THE PRESIDENT'S ARMS TRANSFER POLICY
ABOUT NOT INTRODUCING SOPHISTICATED NEW WEAPONS INTO A
NEW AREA?

A. YES, QUITE OBVIOUSLY.

Q. AND HAS IT BEEN FOUND ACCEPTABLE?

A. AS I SAY, WE ARE GOING TO CONSULT WITH THE CONGRESS.
NO DECISION HAS BEEN MADE WHEN THE PROPOSAL WILL BE MADE
TO THE HILL. BUT I WOULD SAY THAT IF SUCH A DECISION --
IF SUCH A PROPOSAL IS MADE TO THE HILL, IT WILL
CERTAINLY BE IN KEEPING WITH THE PRESIDENT'S ARMS
TRANSFER POLICY.

Q. WELL BUT YOU ARE SAYING, "IF" SUCH A PROPOSAL IS
MADE TO THE HILL. IS THERE SOME DOUBT ABOUT IT?

A. I SAID THAT NO DECISION HAS BEEN MADE ABOUT WHEN A
PROPOSAL MIGHT BE SUBMITTED TO THE HILL. I JUST HAVE TO
REPEAT THAT, AND YOU WILL HAVE TO DRAW YOUR OWN CONCLU-
SIONS, I'M AFRAID. NO DECISION HAS BEEN MADE ABOUT WHEN
A PROPOSAL MIGHT BE SUBMITTED TO THE HILL.

VANCE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Concepts: FIGHTER AIRCRAFT, DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATION, PRESS CONFERENCES, MEETINGS, LIBERATION FRONTS, MILITARY SALES, MISSILES
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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 19-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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TAGS: PFOR, SOPN, MASS, PINS, XF, EG, SA, JO, IS, PLO, (SCRANTON, WILLIAM R)
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